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Institute for Secondary School Teachers To Seek Methods of Increasing Intercultural Understanding. Final Report.

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Twenty-four secondary teachers from six New England public schools and six private preparatory schools in the same towns participated in a 10-day seminar on Intercultural Understanding Through Education. The aim was to establish cooperative arrangement between public and private schools whereby programs in the improvement of intercultural understanding can be developed, programs which could serve as models for other schools. Discussion and postseminar questionnaires and letters produced these findings: that interest in intercultural problems is great, that such problems exist within as well as across national boundaries, and that U.S. black-white problems might be approached as intercultural problems, but that teachers lack adequate background, preservice training, financial means for study, materials, resources, and support of school administrators to teach effectively in this area. Rigid departmental structure and western ethnocentric bias are also inhibitive factors. Intercultural education might be improved by the establishment of (1) programs and a pilot information center to develop materials at the secondary school level; (2) summer institutes, conferences, and fellowships for inservice teachers; (3) pilot projects to set up a preservice program and a regional office to coordinate cooperative programs between public and private schools. Utilization of retired university professors as resource people is also suggested. (JS)

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Final Report

Project Number 8-8049

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INSTITUTE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO SEEK METHODS OF INCREASING INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

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JUNE 1969

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SUMMARY

FINDINGS

1 - That interest in intercultural education is great, but there are not enough teachers with adequate background to teach effectively in this manner and understanding is limited.

2 - That it was graphically demonstrated that intercultural problems exist within national boundaries as well as across national boundaries.

3 - That it was generally agreed that Black/White problems in the United States might be approached fruitfully as intercultural problems, that is to say as a manifestation of broader problems.

4 - That many teachers, who would like to broaden the base of their teaching do not have the financial means for long periods of study in other cultures.

5 - That existing materials are inadequate.

6 - That identifying and making available existing materials is essential.

7 - That without coordination of efforts there will be few changes in existing conditions.

8 - That public and independent schools may gain strength by mutual effort.

9 - That preparation of teachers is presently inadequate in the intercultural field.

10 - That resource people are needed, but there already are some in the schools themselves.

11 - That a rigid departmental structure of many schools is a barrier to new approaches.

12 - That some teachers feel that administrators are hostile to innovation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 - That a program be undertaken to develop new materials at the secondary level for infusion into existing courses and for use in new courses.

2 - That a pilot information center be established specifically for secondary schools.

3 - That a series of summer-long institutes be offered on university and college campuses for secondary school teachers on the philosophy and methods of teaching for intercultural understanding.

4 - That pilot programs be established in at least one university teachers' college to develop a new orientation for teachers-in-training.

5 - That a regional coordinator's office be established as a pilot program in New England to work with schools in that area in the establishment of cooperative intercultural programs involving both public and independent schools.

6 - That a program be established as a pilot project through which university professors in fields related to intercultural understanding, who are retiring because of statutory age limits, might serve for specified periods of time as resource people for groups of schools.

7 - That a similar program be established for recently graduated language and area experts.

8 - That fellowships be made available to secondary school teachers for study in fields related to intercultural understanding.

9 - That conferences be arranged for teachers, administrators, university admissions officers and officials of the College Entrance Examination Board.

INTRODUCTION

The position of the United States in the world requires of its citizens an increased understanding of other peoples and their cultures. Intercultural understanding within our own country is essential, as well, if we are to deal successfully with the problems of racial and ethnic minorities. One of the most important means of communication of the necessary knowledge is our educational system. It is evident that we should work at all levels if we are to develop and maintain an informed population.

The classroom teacher represents a vast resource of knowledge, especially in the field of day-to-day relationships in the classroom. In many cases he finds that he has received programs, ready-made, from above and that he has no opportunity to make his own ideas felt. Since he is in constant contact with students, he has some insight into what is needed.

Therefore, a seminar for classroom teachers was held on the subject of Intercultural Understanding through Education. Teachers from six public school systems and from six private schools located in the same cities and towns were invited to the seminar, in which an attempt was made to establish cooperative arrangements between public and private schools whereby programs in the improvement of intercultural understanding can be developed. The private schools have certain resources not generally available to the public schools and can therefore be helpful in a joint effort.

Six leading New England preparatory schools were used for several reasons. 1 - They are in a relatively small geographical area and can communicate easily; 2 - They have expressed interest; 3 - They have existing programs which lend themselves to the problem at hand.

The goal of the project is to develop models which can be adapted for use by schools in all parts of the United States. In this way a significant contribution may be made to the educational system of the country.

There are more than three billion people in the world today, and more than two thirds of them are non-white and non-western. It is evident that Americans will be affected increasingly by the wants, needs and feelings of these non-western billions in the years ahead. It is essential, then, that Americans know more about the other men who inhabit the earth in order that we may deal with them on a basis of under-

standing rather than of ignorance. This situation represents a problem of the utmost importance. The problem has been recognized publicly by the President in his speech at the Smithsonian Institution in 1965. The Secretary of State has said that we cannot maintain an effective foreign policy without the understanding and support of the citizens of the United States.

In spite of the shrinking of the world in terms of communications, travel, trade, military confrontation; and in spite of the shifting of spheres of influence, proportions of population, political alignments, too often we are still teaching our students about the world in terms of a western ethnocentric point of view which simply does not face up to the facts. This is, in effect, 19th Century teaching for children who will be adults in the latter part of the 20th Century and the early part of the 21st Century. If the same were true of technology, we would still depend on horse-drawn vehicles rather than supersonic airplanes and guided missiles.

Since most Americans still do not go to college and most Americans do not travel abroad, they have little opportunity to gain understanding of other peoples and their cultures. There is more emphasis now than before on undergraduate and graduate programs in non-western studies and language-and-area studies. However, these programs do not reach students below the college level. Thus, the task of providing instruction for the majority of students remains.

It is evident, of course, that programs in intercultural studies for high school students will not produce a new reservoir of experts in international affairs, nor would they be intended to. What these programs can do is provide a basis upon which students may learn to compare customs, achievements, political systems, religious beliefs, life styles and--hopefully--feelings of other peoples with their own. These programs may also provide an understanding of why the customs of others are different from our own, illustrating the ways in which culture develops in response to circumstances. This is education in the reality of the world one lives in. This kind of education is necessary for an intelligent approach to the decisions which are expected of every citizen.

It should be noted here that intercultural understanding is not solely a matter of learning about exotic peoples and places in other parts of the world. The subcultural differences that exist in the United States today represent a significant problem, indeed a threat to the American life as we know it. While there are a number of subcultures in the United States today, the largest and most important is that of the disadvantaged Negro. Understanding the conditions of

life of the urban ghetto dweller involves the gaining of knowledge about the factors which caused these conditions (historic, economic, social). Knowledge about the factors that militate against amelioration of these conditions (prejudice, language difficulty, apathy, economic competition, educational deficiencies of both whites and Negroes, migration patterns, urban crowding, transportation problems, family patterns, and many others), knowledge about the feelings, desires and aspirations of ghetto residents. The difficulties which the Negroes are experiencing and the difficulties the white middle class has in understanding the Negroes represent an intercultural problem which is closely related to our lack of understanding of cultures in other parts of the world.

The pattern, then, is one of looking at social problems from a western, white, ethnocentric point of view. What we are seeking is a way of looking at these problems from the point of view of human beings, identifying differences and the reasons why they exist but seeking common human values through which men may begin to understand each other. The urgency of this problem is pointed out eloquently by Harry Dolan, Chairman of the Douglass House Writers' Council in Watts, in an essay excerpted in the January, 1968 issue of CITY, published by Urban America, Inc. Mr. Dolan wrote in 1966 with reference to another riot in Watts:

> "So at this moment it goes on, the white man going blithely secure in his armies, committing the same, the very same acts, and as he does, these acts are not forgotten or forgiven but are used as powder to load the human guns, and fill the flaming souls until the people are saturated with death and welcome it."
>
> "And then--and then, God help us, for a man blind with injustice does not value worldly goods, for themselves alone, and so he will destroy and destroy until the ache in his soul has burned out...No, there will be no riot in Watts; possibly, just possibly, Armageddon."

These are not the words of an ignorant, shiftless, subhuman. They are the words of a gifted, sensitive writer, who is also a resident of the Negro ghetto. Another quotation may serve to illuminate the gap in understanding. This statement (almost a cliche these days) was made in a telephone conversation immediately after riots in Cincinnati in 1967. The man who made the statement is an educated, middle class, white man, who is a resident of a prosperous suburb in Cincinnati.

> "I don't understand what's the matter. WE gave THEM everything THEY wanted. (emphasis mine) I just don't understand what the trouble is."

The failure here is obviously caused by a lack of understanding. Part of the failure must be laid at the door of our educational system. Each of the men who made the state-

ments quoted above is a decent human being. Each of them feels the rightness of his position. Each of them was educated in the American school system. However, insofar as their ability to empathize with one another and to communicate meaningfully with one another is concerned, they might have been born on different continents and educated in different countries and in different languages.

Since the classroom teacher is the one who is in actual contact with the student, he is better able than others to report on student attitudes and on the prospects and problems of introducing new materials and/or methods in the classroom. While The Bridge is also working in other areas, such as teacher education, in cooperation with a number of universities, it is felt that there is much to be learned through direct interaction with the classroom teacher.

METHODS

The Headmasters of six independent schools in New England were asked to provide two teachers from each school as members of the Institute and to discuss the project with the public school Headmasters to arrange for the participation of two public school teachers from each town's school system.

As consultants we engaged Dr. Virgil S. Ward, Professor of Education, Curry Memorial School of Education, University of Virginia, and John P. Ferguson, originator of THE NATURE OF MAN course at Mercersburg Academy in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, and author of the text also called THE NATURE OF MAN.

The participants and faculty gathered at Northfield School, East Northfield, Massachusetts for ten days. The problem was outlined in the initial session on the evening of June 23. The following day Mr. Ferguson explained in detail his approach to the development of a new course and the contents of his course. The next session was devcted to a discussion of educational theory by Dr. Ward.

Following these initial presentations panels of teachers representing various disciplines (which included History, Social Studies and English) discussed the possibilities with regard to their own disciplines. By this time we had discovered several resource people among the participants. These teachers presented programs on the teaching of Islamic studies, the teaching of Asian studies, Wagner's "Ring" and its relation to mythology, and an evening of Indian music.

We divided the group into rural and urban sections, which discussed problems peculiar to schools in these kinds of areas. We then divided the group into several smaller sections, each of which discussed various methods of promoting intercultural understanding within the existing structure of schools.

There were, of course, many other discussions of the entire group and of smaller groups.

Shortly after the Institute ended, questionnaires were mailed to the participants asking for comments on the structure of the Institute itself. These brought responses with regard to the usual matters such as the size of the group, the length of time spent and the strong and weak points of the institute. A list of these will be made a part of the findings.

In the spring of 1969, letters were sent to the participants asking for tangible results which had been achieved since the Institute. The response to these letters has been sparse. However, some quotations from the letters we have received will be made a part of the findings.

FINDINGS

1 - Interest among the teachers who participated in the institute was found to be great. There was general agreement that students were not learning enough about the world in which they live and the peoples who inhabit it. However, the educational backgrounds of most teachers present have led them to the point of view that western culture is the ideal basis for the education of American students. This traditional idea of education is, of course, the one that prevails generally throughout the country. The arguments advanced in its behalf are the usual ones of understanding one's own heritage, etc. However, this western-oriented education ignores four fifths of mankind at a time when our dealings with the rest of the world require a new dimension of knowledge and understanding of the ways of others.

It became evident almost immediately that the preparation of most of the teachers was not only inadequate for the teaching of intercultural understanding but that, indeed, the training militated against such teaching. It should be stated here that this is not intended as a criticism of any participant in the conference. However, it is an indictment of our current educational system, which ignores most of the world while concentrating narrowly on western concerns. There is little wonder that we as a nation are continually surprised--even at the highest levels--by the behavior of members of other societies, especially "non-western" societies, when we have no knowledge of the bases of that behavior and therefore judge it by our own standards.

One example should suffice. After a week of discussion of the intercultural approach to education, several groups were assigned the task of developing new approaches to the teaching of various subjects. One group reported with some excitement a suggestion for a new course in "World History". The innovation suggested was that the course begin with Sumer rather than Israel

or Greece and then move along the northern shore of the Mediterranean to Western Europe and then to the United States! This is "World History", conceived as though the world were a triangle with its apex in the Middle East and its base the Pacific coast of California. That this view is exorbitantly ethnocentric is obvious to anyone who looks at a map of the world or who stops to think about the influences of such areas as the Far East, Black Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

2 - It was graphically demonstrated that intercultural problems exist within national boundaries as well as across national boundaries.

Much of the discussion returned, time after time, to problems between Blacks and Whites in the United States. Cultural barriers such as language, social orientation and discrimination were identified and discussed frequently.

It was the view of most of the participants that as much of a gulf existed between Blacks and Whites in the United States as between Americans and citizens of other countries. In fact, so much of the discussion centered on domestic difficulties that many of the participants objected. However, the Black participants were sufficiently involved emotionally in domestic problems that these problems remained as a central issue.

All of this echoes the demands of Black students for Black studies. It also points up the need for an <u>intercultural</u> as opposed to a strictly <u>international</u> approach to education. The culture in which a man lives determines reality for him, and this reality quite obviously is not the same for a member of a minority group as it is for a member of the dominant majority, even though they are both citizens and residents of the same country.

3 - General agreement was reached that an approach to Black/White problems in the United States through intercultural perspectives, that is to say as part of a broader set of problems, would be fruitful at least as an experiment. While there was some disagreement with this view, many participants felt that Blacks and Whites could study a third group together more dispassionately than they could study themselves or each other. Studying a third group was suggested as a way of providing a mechanism by which knowledge could be gained about Blacks and Whites in the United States.

There was some objection from Black participants on the basis that there was an immediacy about Black/White problems in the United States that did not exist for other intercultural or international problems. However, the consensus seemed to be that the two should not be treated separately, that ignorance and prejudice

were not limited to majority/minority relationships in this country and that identification and understanding of these phenomena could lead to possible resolutions of domestic problems.

4 - A number of the participants stated that they, and many others like them, would like to broaden their offerings in existing courses but that they did not have the background to do so, that they did not know what materials to use, and that they did not feel that it was possible under present conditions (economic and professional) for them to spend the time necessary to acquire the knowledge necessary to the task. There were many requests for means to solve this problem for them.

5 - Many participants felt that existing materials were inadequate for the task of inculcating intercultural understanding. Complaints took several forms:

a. Texts are too narrowly western.

b. Texts about "non-western" areas are either incomplete, unavailable, too difficult or written with obvious western bias.

c. More films and other media are needed to make subject matter real to the students.

6 - Agreement was unanimous that a means was necessary by which existing materials, courses, media, and resource persons can be identified and by which information about these and other pertinent matters can be disseminated on a regular basis. Each participant expressed his desire to know what other people were doing in other schools in order that he could plan more effectively and avoid duplication of effort.

7 - It has become evident in the eleven months since the institute that there has been little follow-up activity on the plans made for cooperation by members of the institute. Committees were to have met in various locations, but they have not met. Some specific projects such as the production of a videotape by a public school Television Department of an illustrated lecture by a private school teacher have not been carried out. In spite of telephone calls and letters from the coordinator, these things have not happened. The participants who have been called, have been unanimous in their expressed desire to do something but have said that they simply do not have the time to organize these activities on their own. All have agreed on the need for a coordinating person or agency in the area to ensure the establishment and continuation of programs.

8 - Considerable time was spent in discussion of the differences between public and private schools, their problems and their potentialities. It was found that there are many bases for cooperation to the mutual benefit of both types of institutions. Generally speaking, the public schools, which were involved in the institute, have many physical facilities which the private schools do not have. The private schools, on the other hand, have a number of scarce resource people who are not usually available to the public schools. Private schools involved offer such programs as Russian Studies, Asian Studies, Islamic Studies, Cultural Anthropology, etc. It was suggested by a number of participants that the television production facilities of the public schools could be used to produce materials in the areas mentioned above for use by both types of schools, using the resource people and materials of the private schools. There were a number of other suggestions for cooperation outside of the intercultural field, such as exchanges of teachers and students for limited periods of time, visits by students of rural schools to urban schools and vice versa, informal faculty contacts to explore the possibilities of cooperation, the establishment of athletic competition to build a cooperative relationship that could extend to other fields. A few of these suggestions have been implemented, as will be shown in the letters from participants appended to this report.

It is evident that, given sufficient coordination, cooperation can be developed that will, in effect, extend the resources of both public and private schools in the New England area. This need not be expensive. It is a matter rather of someone taking the time to establish the necessary relationships and to assist in the development of desirable programs. The need for a coordinating agency is underscored again in this case.

9 - It is evident that the present preparation of teachers is thoroughly in the tradition of western orientation and that new methods of preparation will be necessary in order that teachers may teach effectively for intercultural understanding. This is not to say that there are no teachers who can teach effectively in this field, but rather that the great majority are so traditionally oriented that the White/Western/Judeo-Christian/Greek Civilization bias is a major factor hampering their teaching in terms of the rest of the world.

10 - There are some capable resource people present in secondary schools, but more are needed and the existing ones should be identified and engaged in the effort to produce needed materials and methods. Examples are two of the participants in the institute: The Reverend Mounir Sa'adah, of the History Department of The Choate School, who is an expert on Islam and teaches Islamic Studies and Arabic at Choate is one. The other is

Mrs. Adele Chakrawarti, who teaches Asian Studies at Northfield School. Both of these teachers have broad and deep experience in their fields. This experience and knowledge are combined with their experience as teachers at the secondary level, allowing them to judge the kinds of materials and methods best suited for their students and others at the same academic levels. Another teacher, John Ferguson, of The Mercersburg Academy, has developed a new course called THE NATURE OF MAN and has written his own text for it. Many of the other participants are interested in doing things in the intercultural area but have not had (by their own admission) the experience necessary to develop new courses, methods or materials. Some of the participants have reported since the institute that they are using some new materials in their teaching as a result of the institute; others are trying new methods such as the "in depth" study of a particular period in the history of a particular culture in order to achieve a sense of humility and of understanding in their students. These experiments are too new to yield decisive results, but it is possible that they may lead to fruitful methods.

11 - It became evident during our discussions that rigid departmentalization at the secondary level is a barrier to intercultural teaching. A number of teachers reported difficulty in trying to work with teachers in other departments.

Another phenomenon which occurred a number of times during the discussions was the expression by teachers of the need to teach students in depth in whatever field the teacher taught. There was some discussion of this in which it was argued that secondary schools are not the places where students become historians or linguists or scientists but rather where they--hopefully--acquire some basic understandings about knowledge and acquire the means with which to pursue knowledge further. This is, in some ways, a matter of emphasis, but the insistence on depth does lead to an insistence on keeping certain parts of the curriculum sacred and thus resistant to any kind of change. Some teachers blamed the College Entrance Examination Board for this rigidity, saying that certain material must be covered in order to prepare the students for the College Entrance Examinations. Several teachers disagreed with this point of view, however, saying that flexibility of approach combined with good teaching would prepare the students for the examinations as well as or better than the more traditional and rigid methods.

12 - Some participants expressed the opinion that administrators were generally hostile to innovation and that schedules and curricula were already so full that it would be difficult to add new courses and/or materials. The point regarding hostility to innovation on the part of administrators was not agreed upon by all of the participants by any means. In fact, during some free time several participants met with Dr. Howard L. Jones, President of Northfield and Mount Hermon Schools and found him both willing and anxious to innovate. The letter from Mr. Sheetz

of the Pioneer Valley School Union, appended hereto, indicates his willingness to try some new programs within the structure of his responsibilities. However, it was reported by some participants that "rocking the boat" was frowned upon. There will be further discussion of this in the Section on Recommendations.

The point about the curriculum being so full that adding something new is difficult is an argument that surfaces everywhere as soon as an idea for change is introduced. The answer agreed upon by most of the participants is that it is necessary to decide what is essential in the curriculum of any school and to determine the reasons for this essential character. Often the process of re-examination can reveal many parts of a curriculum that are there because of tradition or convenience and that changes can be made for the benefit of the students and their teachers. This is a matter of judgement which must reflect the attitude of the school administration with regard to what is important and what is not.

LETTERS FROM PARTICIPANTS

The Choate School
Wallingford, Connecticut

THE NORTHFIELD "BRIDGE" INTERCULTURAL INSTITUTE

The institute at Northfield last June was a very useful event. It served many purposes:

1. It brought together many people with varied backgrounds and interests who are engaged in public and independent education for a period of time when we were able to exchange views and share our experiences. We discovered that we had common problems and objectives. We alsc found that our experiences are useful to one another. There are important areas in which we can share our expertism and our resources. This can lead to a greater efficiency in the use of our resources and to the mutual enrichment of our programs.

2. These contacts begun at the institute were kept going to a considerable degree after the conference. On at least three occasions I consulted with some of the members of the institute and received useful help from them. In turn there were two occasions when I was of assistance.

3. I was personally encouraged by the response of the members of the institute to a lecture that I gave there. As a result I prepared two illustrated and documentary lectures, one on Islam and the other on the Middle East. Both lectures have been in demand in various parts of the country. The demand for such lectures on various world cultures is considerable. It is my considered judgment that, were these lectures or similar ones to be recorded on visual media, they can be of much use.

4. In so far as our approach to teaching is concerned, we affected a few changes as a direct result of suggestions made at the institute. These were mainly in line with inter-disciplinary cooperation.

5. Personally, I think that the purposes of the institute can be multiplied and further developed were there to be a responsible person to pursue them on a year round basis assigned to this area. Many of us are too busy and involved in our own routines to be able to make the necessary contacts or get the programs going.

Of course many of the results of the institute were not measurable. The enrichment that we received from the excellent leadership and the windows that they opened for us have a lasting value. We hope that such endeavors can be made available to more people in other parts of the country.

Mounir R. Sa'adah

23 High Street
Monson, Massachusetts

Because I live in the academy environs, I frequently see Cliff Allo and Tony Robinson. Clifford, although an "outsider" teaching in a private school, ran for school committeeman in the public schools and was elected.

In my own teaching I have been able to introduce a larger segment of Black poetry into the American Literature studies. The next step is to get approval to order Negro novels (paperback) in class-size quantities so that I may utilize them with the general and the commercial students as well as the college preparatory.

Nothing earth shattering - but a greater awareness and appreciation.

Cordially,

Clarence L. Martin, Jr.

Pomfret School
Pomfret, Connecticut

It is good to hear again from you, particularly since I have been thinking a lot these past weeks about inter-cultural materials for a library. We are about to move into our new building and we have been alloting space - anything more about that project we spoke of last June? We have become officially a government document/publication depository so that we are now open more to the general public as well as to the other secondary schools of the area. When the Trustees agreed toopen our school library to the adult and semi-adult publicfor eight hours a day we all blanched a bit, but so far it hasn't been really tested.

We still haven't made the direct contact with Woodstock Academy but it is an unfortunate personnel problem and we may not move until the administration up there moves (out!) We have been going hot and heavy on black-white, rural-urban problems in our twice weekly discussions and speakers; we have increased our own course offerings to cover Asian (2 courses in senior year, choice of Indian, Japanese, Chinese; a full year course on Asia, political, economic and social history); African, a senior elective; Black American History; Black Literature; and Urban Studies. We hope that Woodstock will be able to share this when they get going. We have had our so-called lecture programs in the intercultural area and have opened them to the public with special invitation to the schools. This has included dance groups, Harrison Salisbury, Tom Wickard...

Our own drama people have worked on protest plays from different cultures - like Day of Absence, Sergeant Mulgrave's Dance Aria de Capo.... We haven't had as much outside participation as we might but it has always gotten good publicity.

We have had continued contact with the Loomis people especially Jim Wilson as we have been in the talking stages of an advanced program for talented kids, but we are bogged down by time and proprietary rights at the moment.

John A. Williams

LELAND P. WILSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
599 Matianuck Avenue
Windsor, Connecticut 06095

Since our last communication I have been appointed Administrative Assistant at L. P. Wilson Junior High School. Since the middle of February I have been performing the duties of the vice-principal.

This year as a result of our seminar I have developed a program of team teaching at this school that has incorporated many of the ideas and objectives discussed by the many participants at Northfield.

If I had one major comment to say about what occurred at Northfield it would be that it gave me an opportunity to meet with private school people and to be more open-minded to new programs and ideas.

I really feel that a 5-7 day follow-up in August or a time suitable, to once again meet the same people to summarize the results of the initial conference would be of value. Especially, if these people would bring curricula noting changes as a result of our experiences at Northfield.

Kenneth C. Stratton
Administrative Assistant

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL UNION No. 18
SERVING BERNARDSTON, GILL LEYDEN, NORTHFIELD,
WARWICK AND THE PIONEER VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

In addition to the report of Jack Trumbull (copy attached) I'd like to say that there has been a mutual improvement in attitude. For example, for the first time since I've been here the private schools Public Relations Office has provided us with tickets to their sacred music concerts, etc. and we have invited them to attend our events.

We have not progressed so far as we hoped to in the sharing of faculty but I vote that there is greater sharing between the two private schools which could soon expand to include us. Example, their two history departments are holding joint meetings for the first time this year, and perhaps we can be included next year.

We are planning to add two, and possibly three, more courses to our Social Studies curriculum next year, as well as further revise our present course content. We will also add another teacher to our department.

For the first time we have also been holding K-12 social studies meetings rather than separate K-6 and 7-12 meetings. While progress is not so swift as desired, we are moving forward about as rapidly as we can at this time.

Ken Sheetz
Superintendent of Schools

PIONEER VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL
Northfield, Massachusetts

In reply to your letter dated May 5, 1969, I would like to list the following activities as being tangible results stemming from the institute.

In the first place, during the course of the school year we have had limited contacts with both the Northfield School for Girls and Mount Hermon. For example, the librarian at the Northfield Schools has been most cooperative in allowing us to use the facilities of that institution. Hopefully, next year we will be able to maintain and expand our contacts there. In February we were also invited to preview a series of films at Mt. Hermon, which, I understand, are available for use in our classes.

Probably more important, at Pioneer Valley Regional School, on all levels of instruction within the Social Studies department, we have tried to create a better understanding of the situations faced by minority groups in our country at the present time.

More emphasis has been placed on the study of world cultures both on the Junior and Senior High levels. Next year, we plan to introduce a seventh grade course on non-western cultures, and an eleventh grade course in World Geography with emphasis on a cultural approach. The eleventh grade course will be an elective.

Even within the World History course, we have attempted to emphasize the importance of contributions made by peoples from all parts of the world.

Hopefully, these initial programs have served a twofold purpose - to provide a learning experience for those involved and to create a better atmosphere for the development of intercultural understandings.

John C. Trumbull

THE MERCERSBURG ACADEMY
Mercersburg, Pa.
17236

In reference to your request of May 6, 1969, for outcomes and tangible results from the Northfield Conference, I welcome this opportunity to state that the Conference had a very strong effect upon my educational career.

The major influence was to underline for me the tremendous need for more creative and effective approaches to achieving world understanding. My own course The Nature of Man was seen by me in a new light, and I have been made much more tolerant of my approaches toward differences in cultural points of view representing different countries. I think my teaching has been vastly improved because of these new approaches, particularly in the area of comparative religion.

I have also had contacts with many of the other people in the program who are engaged in similar activities, including a teacher at a university, a chaplain at a boys' school, and several other participants in the program. I have been informed also of new programs and new approaches starting at other schools through the influence of the Conference.

I think the most important result for me personally was a tremendous expansion of my horizons, and I realize the amount of work that still has to be done in America to increase our understanding of other people. We still have a strong Western bias in our educational system, and we must develop methods for educating young people that overcome this restriction in our vision. The Northfield Conference has challenged me to develop several new approaches, one of which includes the use of visual symbols to bridge gaps in a non-verbal way. I have already begun to work out a lecture to this end and have given it at a school. The activities of The Bridge have thus been instrumental in encouraging and stimulating my educational philosophy.

It is my earnest hope that The Bridge will be strongly supported by individuals, other organizations, and governmental agencies so that it can continue its vital work.

John P. Ferguson

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRES

Strongest Features

12 - Genuine concern of organizers
6 - Diverse group of participants
5 - Lack of restrictive structures
4 - Informality
4 - Private and Public School participation
4 - Stimulation of intercultural awareness
4 - Group discussions
3 - Good speakers and resource people
3 - Length of time
3 - Opportunity to meet teachers from nearby communities
3 - Opportunity to examine new materials and suggestions for courses
2 - Exposure to new teaching approaches
2 - Small size of group
2 - Realization that others are concerned

Weakest Features

6 - Insufficient orientation
4 - Insufficient structure
3 - Insufficient specificity
3 - Insufficient diversity of participants
2 - Occasional lack of honest confrontation

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 - That a program be undertaken to develop new materials at the secondary level for infusion into existing courses and for use in new courses.

Looking realistically at the situation which now obtains, it is evident that many teachers, especially in the area of social studies, would like to expose their students to at least a little bit of material regarding foreign cultures. These teachers, as noted above, often have backgrounds insufficient to the task of developing, finding or using intercultural materials as effectively as they would like to. Several teachers asked specifically for materials that could be used now as adjuncts to existing courses. The teachers admit that this kind of use does not provide deep knowledge of another culture but that it does provide an opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate to his students that there are a number of alternative ways of looking at the world and of living in it. It must be said further that an experimental use of some infusion materials in existing courses does not require the complete overhaul of any school system. The political and cost advantages of this are self-evident.

Since there are some resource people now teaching at the secondary level, who have both knowledge of other cultures and experience in what students can absorb at this level, it is evident that these people should be identified and engaged in the effort to produce new materials, especially of the infusion type. Teachers at the institute complained that the great university centers were much more concerned with scholarly erudition than they were with translating esoteric knowledge into understandable form for students at the secondary level. This implies no criticism of the great universities. It does, however, point up a difficulty for the secondary school teacher and his students.

Two examples of the kinds of resource people we have in mind have already been mentioned, namely Mr. Sa'adah and Mrs. Chakrawarti. There are others in New England schools who have expert knowledge of other cultures.

It is recommended then that these people be identified and that they be engaged in a cooperative effort to produce pertinent films, recordings, videotapes, teachers' guides and bibliographies for use at the secondary level. An example would be one or a short series of lectures, illustrated properly and produced on film or videotape, on the subject of Islam. Mr. Sa'adah has the knowledge and ability to act as the protagonist, and can provide much of the material necessary for visual illustration. In fact, he has already developed, at the suggestion of the Coordinator, an illustrated lecture which has been given to a number of audiences, both in schools and out, and which has been warmly received. If this could become a part of a resource bank and be available, with a teacher's guide and a brief bibliography, it would be used by teachers as an infusion for existing courses. The same kind of thing should be done with regard to the various major cultures and religions of the world.

In this way a valuable body of useful materials could be developed immediately. While, again, these materials would not provide "in depth" studies of the cultures involved, they would at least acquaint students with the fact that there are such cultures and that these cultures have some validity of their own. When one stops to think that China is never even mentioned in the History, Literature or other courses which make up the social studies and humanities offered to most students, he must realize that this is a glaring omission. The same is true for India, Japan, Indonesia, Black Africa, Black America, Latin America, Oceania and Eastern Europe.

Ideally, the curriculum should be restructured in such a way that the phenomenon of culture itself and some of its more important manifestations, worldwide, should be the subject of study by every student. However, such a restructuring needs must take a long time. It is essential that some contact with these cultures be provided for our students now and be provided in a way that is not inherently biased by the western view that everything else is exotic and a little bit quaint.

It is suggested that the pilot project for this developmental program be undertaken in New England, where there is a wealth of resources and where geographic separation is minimal, and that it be developed cooperatively with public and private secondary schools.

2 - That a pilot information center be established specifically for schools at the secondary level. Every participant in the institute expressed the need for a means by which he could find out what others were doing in intercultural education, by which he could identify materials and courses and resource persons, and by which he could be kept informed about recent developments in the field.

An adequate bibliography, annotated as to content, area, level of difficulty, quality of illustration, quality of writing, and comprehensiveness, would be an invaluable aid to teachers. This bibliography could be developed and maintained and updated by an information center.

A newsletter describing recent developments, such as new courses, new programs and new materials, new travel opportunities, etc., should be published for secondary school teachers and administrators on a regular basis by the center.

This pilot center does not need to be a huge installation with banks of computers. Indeed, it could begin as an office in a school library, manned by an interested and qualified person and supported by an advisory board of resource people who have knowledge of the major cultures of the world and who are presently connected with secondary schools. Several of the schools which were represented at the Institute have offered space in their libraries for such a pilot center and have expressed their desire to be of assistance. Among these are Choate, Pomfret and Northfield.

The functions of the center, then, would be these:

a. The identification and evaluation of existing intercultural materials.

b. The identification of courses and projects relevant to intercultural understanding at the secondary level.

c. The identification of resource persons in the field.

d. The regular and effective dissemination of information concerning the above.

e. The development and maintenance of an annotated bibliography and a listing of films and other materials and the places where they can be obtained.

f. The development of a data service through which teachers and administrators could ask for and receive information as they need it.

Again, New England recommends itself for this kind of center because of the wealth of resources available at the secondary level and because of the geographic proximity of the schools in that area.

John Williams, Librarian at Pomfret School, Pomfret, Connecticut, suggested this idea during the institute and has since written inquiring about the possibility of implementing it. Support at the level of perhaps $10,000 a year for three years would establish the center and allow it to develop sufficient services and interest so that it might become self-sus-

taining after that period.

It should be emphasized that this center is of the highest priority in the opinion of the great majority of the participants. It is important to note, as well, that this should be a pilot center, which could lead to other similar centers in other parts of the country or become part of a larger center at a later time if that seems appropriate. <u>The center is badly needed now.</u>

3 - That a series of summer-long institutes be offered on college and university campuses for secondary school teachers on the philosophy and methods of teaching for intercultural understanding.

Since it is evident that the western-oriented backgrounds of teachers hamper their effective teaching in an intercultural manner, a mechanism is necessary to develop attitudes and skills appropriate to intercultural teaching. One method of doing this with a minimum of dislocation and expense would be through six- to eight-week institutes at colleges and universities equipped to handle such programs. Each program need not be identical to every other program for two reasons:

a. Each college and university has different resources and could proceed according to its resources.

b. There would be experimental value in having institutes with differing approaches in order to determine the effectiveness of these approaches.

These summer institutes should not be thought of in terms of courses which would turn out experts on particular cultures. That is not possible in two months. They should be considered rather as intensive exposures to the kinds of differences which lead to prejudice and the kinds of similarities, achievements and explanations of function that lead to tolerance and empathy. In effect, one would seek some of the dispassionate tolerance of the Anthropologist, who sees each culture as a self-sufficient system adequate to the needs of its members. One would also seek to point out some of the alternative ways in which various cultures have developed behavior in adaptation to environment; these might include such things as housing, food raising, art, religion, language type, political system, transportation, clothing, literature, etc. In addition, appropriate materials would be identified and suggestions made for teaching methods and for continued reading on the part of teachers.

The results to be hoped for would be broadened attitudes, increased tolerance, increased ability to find and use materials relating to intercultural understanding, new methods of in-

culcating such understanding in students, and the development of new approaches to problems of intercultural understanding. These institutes would be useful to teachers in virtually all disciplines but would be most specifically designed for teachers in the fields of social studies and the humanities.

4 - That pilot programs be established in one or more teachers' colleges or universities to develop a new orientation for teachers in training in order that they may teach more effectively for intercultural understanding.

As reported above, the western orientation of our present educational system needs to be changed and broadened to bring a realization of the important contributions of other cultures to the world. This can be done in a number of ways, which include area studies, travel programs, ghetto programs, world emphasis in history, art and literature, programs in the social sciences.

Again, different universities will approach the problem in different ways. An experimental design should be set up with coordination by an organization such as The Bridge in order that attitudes can be measured and an appropriate record maintained of methods and materials developed and used. The Bridge has relationships with a number of universities which have large teacher education programs and could move quickly to assist in the development of pilot programs.

5 - That a regional coordinator's office be established as a pilot program in New England to work with schools in that area toward the establishment of cooperative intercultural programs involving both public and independent schools.

In the time since the Institute met last summer it has become evident that, no matter how much interest and good will there is among the teachers, significant programs will not be started without the help of an outside agency. The teachers are simply too busy to do what is necessary without assistance. They have ideas about programs that should be tried and, working together, could begin the development of many new programs which would strengthen their teaching and that of others, but they need a central point of contact. Communication is one problem, scheduling of meetings another.

Again, New England is suggested for several reasons:

a. There is a rich variety of public and private schools there.

b. The schools are close enough to each other geographically to make cooperative programs feasible.

c. A start has been made through the institute and other related activities so that there is a readiness to do something.

d. We have already identified a number of resource persons in the New England schools.

It would seem to be practical to think of establishing the coordinator's office at the same location as the information center. This would lessen costs and provide continuity for a program involving information, cooperative programs, teacher and student exchange, development of materials, work with resource persons. If significant progress is made in one geographic area, similar programs might be established elsewhere, or cooperative arrangements could be made between the New England schools and schools in other parts of the country. For example, some educators have expressed the view that a "year abroad in the United States", that is to say a year's experience in a different kind of school in a different part of the country might provide intercultural understandings of the same kind that would be provided by a year in another country.

6 - That a program be established as a pilot project through which college and university professors in fields pertinent to intercultural understanding, who are retiring because of statutory age limits, serve for specified periods of time as resource people for groups of schools.

There are many professors who have significant knowledge and experience of various cultures of the world, of psychology, of sociology, of anthropology, of the study of religions, of languages and linguistics, of history, of literature, of political science, and other pertinent fields, and who do not wish to retire from academic life. If their store of knowledge, wisdom and experience could be made available to secondary schools, it would represent a great resource which is not presently available.

These senior scholars would be in residence at or near a school and would work with teachers, administrators and students of a group of schools in the same geographic area, providing advice and counsel in the development of programs in the intercultural field. Their availability to the schools would be an unusual and invaluable stimulus to action as well as a resource that could be found in no other way. Working with the schools directly, they could provide knowledge which could be translated into materials and methods uniquely useful to the schools in question. Over a period of a few years the programs developed by various groups of schools in cooperation with these senior scholars would emerge as a significant body of intercultural material which could be used by schools in all parts of the country.

A schedule might be devised whereby scholars could move after a year from one group of schools to another, thus broadening the perspectives and opportunities of each group as a scholar in one discipline was replaced by a scholar in another. This kind of program would bring into being a badly needed program which could be begun immediately rather than having to wait for years of development in another manner.

The program could be managed through the office of the coordinator mentioned above in cooperation with schools which chose to participate.

7 - That a program similar to that described in (6) above be developed using the talents of younger scholars as they graduate from institutions where they have been trained as language and area specialists.

8 - That fellowships be made available to secondary school teachers for study in fields related to intercultural understanding.

A number of the participants in the Institute and other teachers with whom we have met have expressed the desire to have the time and the means to develop new courses, or to educate themselves further with the specific goal of broadening their own intercultural knowledge and understanding. It is suggested that these fellowships be flexible enough to allow teachers to spend a year abroad, a year in an urban ghetto, a year in a university, or a year working on a constructive program leading toward their goals. As conditions change, so do the needs of teachers. It is essential that the great reservoir of talent represented by the teachers in secondary schools be maintained and improved. The teachers need the time and the opportunity to make the contributions they want to make and which they are capable of making.

9 - That a series of conferences and seminars be developed for administrators and teachers to discuss with university admissions officers and officials of the College Entrance Examination Board ways in which curricular standards might be broadened to make possible a greater emphasis on intercultural education. This recommendation is not intended as a criticism of any of the individuals or groups mentioned above but rather as a way of opening discussions on a subject that is causing difficulty to many teachers and administrators. These conferences should be regional in order to allow for convenience of travel and to keep costs at a minimum.